

A

REVIEW

OF THE

STATE

OF THE

BRITISH NATION.

Tuesday, December 11. 1711.

HE that writes against the Sense of two Potent, Contending and Violent Parties, is likely to be Censur'd by both, and certain to be Cruell'd by one — As I thank God I have never Written for any Party yet, so I find myself almost Writing against every Party now; and doubt not I may be a Sacrifice to both, or at least to the Fury of that which shall prevail, let it be which it will.

But while I am Convinc'd I am Writing for the general Good, and upon a Right Foundation of Truth, *that Truth and I against you all*, let the Venture be what it will; tho' Whig and Tory are both against me;

I am the same, and so I hope to remain.

Yet Truth shall Convince and Silence me at any Time, if it were spoken by a Beggar-Boy; and without Truth, Universal Clamour is of no Value to me at all.

I am at the Point about the Emperor, and that is over, the Enemy have given it up: I am now upon the Subject of a Treaty — If a Man owes you a Thousand Pound, and refusing or delaying to pay it, you go to Law with him for it — Your Suit is just, and you push it forward with all your Might, who can blame you? — But if the Man sends you Word he will pay you, and

and desires you to stop your Proceedings, for he will come and give you full Satisfaction — If you go on with your Suit then, will not every one say you are Mad? That your Proceedings are Vexatious, and you are not seeking your Right, but maliciously endeavouring to Ruin the Person?

We Quarrel the French King's Proposal, — Well, I'll join with every Thing you say on that Head — But the French says, *Do but meet him in a Treaty, he will give every one of you Reasonable Satisfaction.*

Now this is the Question before us, Whether it is Reasonable to hear what this Satisfaction is that France will give, yea or no? I confess I see nothing against it but meer Ceremony, and making War about Forms, which I hope we shall consider of; nor can I see but every Party among us have Reason to join with this; we are making War for Right, not to Conquer France, but to keep France from Conquering us, and Oppressing Europe; if this Right may be obtain'd, the Reason, and wish that the Justice of your War ceases: The Enemy says he will do Right, he will give Reasonable Satisfaction to you all; you cannot say he only feigns, till you hear him; if on a Treaty he does not do it, then no-body can open their Mouths against a War, and if he does, no-body can for it.

1. *The WHIGS ought to be for a Treaty,* That if there are any such Practices, as some People have suggested, whether among Ministers of State, or any other People, to bring about Separate Treaties, or carry on Clandestine Negotiations, for private or Party Interests, they may thus be all Detected, they may be smother'd in their Birth, as must be the Consequence of an open, full, fair Treaty, plain and above-board, all Parties being present, and every Article and Answer publicly Debated; and if any such private Clandestine Negotiations have been, I wish they may be Defeated, and therefore I am for a Treaty.

2. *The New Ministry ought to be for a Treaty,* That the Scandal and Clamour of such Clau-

destine Treating may be taken away, which by a fair, open, and free Way of Treating, will be remov'd, and die of course.

3. *The Old Ministry ought to be for it,* That it may appear whether their Objections were good or not, against the former Offers of the French, and whether they are against hearkening to Terms of Peace, if Safe and Honourable, *Yea or No*; That it may appear they are not for Eternizing the War, but have Substantial Objections to make, against all that have been already offer'd, and that they may prevail by these Reasons to Reject the Peace, unless France makes such Offers, as are Reasonable to be accepted by all the Allies.

4. *Those that are for a Good Peace ought to be for a Treaty,* as the only Way, in which, by a Vigorous Arguing with, and Adhering to one another, they may let France see, that nothing but making such Offers as are Reasonable, Honourable, and Safe, can obtain the Peace he pretends to desire; and that he is not likely to obtain that by Craft of Words, and Fineness of Address, which he cannot get by down-right Fighting and the Sword.

5. *Those that are against a Peace ought to be for a Treaty,* That they may not drive the Confederates to make it up without them, and that they may not lose the Advantages of breaking the Measures of those, who they know push at a Peace, whether they will or no.

I confess, I can by no means applaud the Politicks, any more than I can the Justice of the Imperial Counsels, which they tell us, declare against a Treaty at all, and declare they will send no Plenipotentiaries thither; no question when his Imperial Majesty comes to consider of it, he will be wiser; for as a certain Author notes, there ought no more to be a Separate War carried on in this Case, than a Separate Peace made by any of the Confederates; and if the Emperor has good Reasons for carrying on the War, no doubt, at a Congress for a Treaty, those Reasons will have their full Scope, and may prevail to bring over the

Majority of the Confederacy to them, and to carry on the War by Consent; if those Reasons are not good, they may perhaps be so Confuted, as to Convince his Imperial Majesty that he is wrong, and so he may be brought to comply with a Good Peace, if it be to be had: But to refuse to Treat, or meet at a Congress; to refuse to hear Offers of Peace, or Enquire whether they are Just and Satisfying or no; I must confess, I see nothing in this, that can be call'd by any Name I care to mention: No Enemy with whom we think it not below us to fight, can be so mean, as to have it be below us to Treat with them; unless you can Treat your Enemy as the Ancient Masters that went out against their Slaves with Whips in their Hands to Correct them, did, thinking it below them to fight with them as Soldiers: Even Subjects in Rebellion are Treated with——No War so Obstinate, but Offers of Accommodation are always listened to, and I confess, I can see no Room for any considerable Objection against a Treaty, let us suppose ourselves of which Side we will.

But here to avoid the Cavils of the Quarrellsome, as I distinguish'd at first between *Treating* of Peace and *Making* Peace, which I hope every one will allow to be just, so I shall, previous to any Argument for a Treaty, explain what I mean by a Treaty; for as there are various Meanings in the present Acceptation of the Word, so I desire to be understood in all I say, according to my profess'd Meaning, and not according to the Malicious Construction of others, and this, I think, is but just——For the World are mighty fond at this Time of Day, of putting their own Meaning upon other People's Expressions, and more especially upon mine.

When the Proposals lately said to be made by France towards a Peace, were Communicated by Her Majesty to the Allies, and the Earl of Strefford her Majesty's Ambassador gave an Account of it to the States-General, I have been told, *I will not say it was really so*, That the Substance of his Representation was to this purpose, viz.

“ That the King of France had made great Professions of a sincere desire to make Peace, and had made Overtures to Her Majesty to that purpose; That Her Majesty desiring nothing more than to put an End to the Effusion of Christian Blood, and to see in Her Reign, a happy Conclusion put to this long War; had Consented to hear what the King of France would offer towards such a Peace; and having receiv'd Proposals in Writing, Sign'd by the Person who deliver'd them, in the Name of his Master; Her Majesty had Communicated them to all the Allies——That Her Majesty did desire Peace so earnestly, that she did think it was Reasonable to set a Treaty on Foot; That if the French were sincerely dispos'd to give Satisfaction to all the Allies, it might appear, and a Lasting Peace might be obtain'd: But that Her Majesty was resolv'd never to abandon her Confederates, but would adhere steadily in such a Treaty to the Interest of all Her Allies; and if the Offers of the French were not such, as upon which a Good, Safe, and Honourable Peace might be obtain'd, That then Her Majesty would continue in Conjunction with her said Allies, to push on the War with the utmost Vigour, till such a Peace should be obtain'd.

I am speaking this indeed in my own Words, tho' exactly in the Sense that I have heard it related in: If this be the true State of the Case, I believe it will be no longer a Wonder that the Dutch so readily comply'd with the Queen's desire; for what in the World can be more equal than this Proposal?——If I am not right in this, and no such Thing was said to the Dutch I have no more to say; but this, and it is for this Reason I speak of it, that it is upon this Foundation, and this only, that I am Arguing for a Treaty and a Peace, and I cannot think any Honest Man can Object here against me.

This is the meaning upon which I go, when I say no-body can Resist a Treaty —
I know

I know what is and will be said, viz. The Thing was put in a good Way before, viz. By Way of Preliminary, and when the King of France thinks fit to come up to those Preliminaries, Sign them, and Execute the Terms of them, he may have a Peace, and till that is done, we ought to push on the War.

There are two Ways which some People speak to this; 1st. the New Party's Method, which is, By Objecting against the Preliminaries themselves, as Exorbitant and Unreasonable; and 2^{dly}. By saying, That the French propose in an immediate Treaty, to come directly to the Point, and to give Satisfaction to the Allies, and the Queen having thought it Reasonable also, we need not Dispute that; since if the same End can be obtain'd, whether by a Preliminary Treaty, or a General Treaty, it is the same Thing, and they say it would seem hard, that if the Substance be offer'd, we should loose 100 Thousand Men's Lives more, and 20 Millions of Money about the Forms.

I care not which of these they Argue upon, nor shall I espouse either directly. But if it be the Queen's Pleasure, that we should begin the Work by a New Way of Treating, and laying aside the Preliminaries, Treat it all over again; I see no great Matter in it to Contend upon, so be it the main Thing be obtain'd; I know there is one of the Preliminaries which much has been said about, as Hard and Unreasonable, viz. That when all was granted which the Confederates were to have before the Treaty, and at that Treaty, one general Unlimited Clause was added. viz. That the

Confederates should be at Liberty to make further Demands at the Treaty, without mentioning what those Demands should be. So that, say they, if they had thought fit in those other Demands, to have bid the King of France demit the Crown to the Dauphin, he must have done it, or have had no Peace, even after he had deliver'd up all the Towns which were Preliminary to be deliver'd up. I have no more to say to this at present, than that I do not understand it. And that this was mightily improv'd in France, to Animate the People against that Treaty, and let them see how Exorbitant the Confederates were in their Demands.

But this is no Argument of mine;

The Case now is, in short, this; the French have refus'd Treating on the Preliminaries. We have fought them two Years since that, without being able to bring them to submit to it; but they do submit to a General Treaty, and promise to give all the Confederates Satisfaction: Now the Question is, in short, whether you will hear what they have to say or no? Whether you will meet and talk with them or no? The Queen desires it, the Dutch Consent to it, and where is the harm of it that we should desire to refuse it?—I do confess I do not see the Damage of it; I see a great deal of Confusion, Disorder, and Distraction in refusing it; but nothing amiss in the Thing; because, if the French do not give you Satisfaction, the War goes on, there is no harm done; if other People see farther into this than I do, I cannot help it—I own I am for coming to a fair, open, free Treaty, whether with, or without Preliminaries, it seems to me all one.